

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8001/11
Paper 11

Key messages

- Candidates are advised to take time to consider all the questions before making the choice of which question to answer.
- Candidates need to focus on the question's key words.
- Candidates are reminded that only one essay is required to be written, which should be of sufficient length.
- If a question requires candidates to think of "your region" or "your country", either of these should be the focus of the answer.
- Candidates should ensure that introductions and conclusions are meaningful.
- It is important that responses include discussion and evidence such as illustration and examples.
- Candidates should avoid simply listing what they know about a topic.
- It is important that handwriting is legible.

General comments

A significant number of essays were well written in terms of style and accuracy. There was a range of ideas and candidates demonstrated their ability to discuss political, ethical, and scientific matters in their choices of questions. Although some questions proved more popular than others, there were no questions that were not attempted.

Generally, candidates expressed themselves freely and thoughtfully. Arguments were usually persuasive, reasoned and exemplified, which is crucial in order to be successful in this paper. Candidates communicated their own opinions in a respectful and thoughtful manner. Many of the questions required candidates to take a position on sensitive topical issues, which they attempted well and reasonably.

Most candidates used the available time well. Essays were usually well-planned with the traditional format of introduction, exposition, discussion and concluding remarks. Where essays did not reach the higher mark bands, this was usually a consequence of not providing examples to support points.

Some less successful candidates offered a balanced set of views on both sides of an argument without an evaluation and discussion of the limitations of the knowledge and information presented. Candidates are reminded to show where they stand and why on the matter in question. In doing this, merely assertive statements should be avoided.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Several essays discussed the legacy of colonialism and slavery, and others highlighted the profound influence of individuals such as Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King. Candidates who took the word "individual" as a key word reflected on the relative powerlessness of the solitary human being. They observed that the individual needs others to make a difference, that it is in our social and communal relations, our sharing of a common life, that human dignity is upheld. Candidates who saw that the question was about how far it is possible to be effective in challenging society were more successful than those who merely discussed equality and fairness. There were many excellent responses to this question, some of which referred to local instances of individuals proclaiming the right to be valued within the communities they serve. These responses showed that it is difficult to make a stand in circumstances where it might be argued that discretion is the better part of valour.

Question 2

Most responses mentioned the function of anniversaries in uniting people. Also, several answers saw that national celebrations, while encouraging remembrance, can also inhibit understanding and reflection. The deceptions promoted by chauvinism, the uncritical love of one's country, were referred to in a number of essays. Several candidates noted that anniversaries can provide a rhythm on life's journey and mentioned that tradition is to be lived, not just appealed to. Weaker responses simply listed and described celebrations and anniversaries rather than examining whether they should be celebrated and for how long. Only a few essays focused exclusively on either nations or people.

Question 3

Thoughtful responses to this question considered the meaning of equality. Candidates often pointed out that equality was not just about the redistribution of wealth and resources, but had more to do with our relationships with one another. The experience of slavery and other forms of subjugation were frequently referred to. Many thoughtful distinctions were made about the feasibility of equality between parents and children, teachers and candidates, for example. In situations such as those it was argued that changes of attitude rather than measures were needed, and that it is important to recognise the otherness and independence of others. In this context, legislative matters were discussed and examined, for example, the legalisation of same-sex marriage, gender inequality, and equal voting rights.

Question 4

Responses to this question varied in quality. Due to the fact that women are often assigned specific and limiting roles in many societies, this question was occasionally responded to in a passionate and compelling manner. The courage of women and the risks they take in the public life of powerful and often violent male dominated societies was frequently commented upon. Many candidates mentioned the political achievements of women across the world in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. However, it was pointed out by many that the political prominence of these women had not translated to the domestic sphere where many women across the world are still coerced and devalued. Weaker answers resorted to listing so-called female attributes such as gentleness, motherliness and the ability to multi-task, to strengthen their argument that women could indeed make a difference. Some argued that women were too emotional to exert political power effectively.

Question 5

Less successful candidates simply listed the achievements and wonders of science. Few considered the limits of scientific language and explanation in our search for meaning in our lives. Others criticised science for bringing about mutually assured destruction in the world. Better answers considered the limitations of science and ways in which, contrary to the intentions of the inventors and researchers, science had been a source of danger and disappointment. One answer considered how technology continues to make communication effortless, but does not promote mutual understanding. A few responses considered the scientific debate on climate change.

Question 6

This was a popular question and demonstrated that environmental issues had been widely discussed before. To answer this question well, the key word "effectively" had to be the main focus and not the mere cataloguing of environmental threats. Many candidates discussed examples from around the world. One subject explored was plastic disposal (or the lack of it). A few candidates, while acknowledging the widespread concerns, argued with some justification that developing nations have just as much right to develop as others, even if in doing so, they would contribute to pollution. The argument that less economically developed nations should forego industrial progress was persuasively dismissed.

Question 7

A number of candidates recognised that adverts were not just for material products. They cited the adverts for particular good causes that are designed to catch the eye and the conscience. A few also argued that propaganda, particularly in poster form, is a form of advertising that often uses stereotyping to gain attention. That such advertising can reinforce prejudice was also mentioned. Most candidates, however, concurred with the question's proposal and focused exclusively on gender stereotypes. They struggled to develop their

responses beyond the stereotypes of the perfect body, face, hair, and so on. This was a common weakness, but there were attempts to suggest that this should not be the case and that advertising might be changing.

Question 8

Good answers drew on the range of performing arts; drama, music, dance, and related activities. Candidates reflected on their own school experiences and many expressed their concern that financial constraints are leading to the disappearance of these life enhancing activities from the curriculum. Many referred to their own positive experiences, pointing out that mental health, expression of individuality as well as confidence and teamwork are all enhanced by participation in the performing arts. Other candidates who expressed their concerns about the narrowing of the curriculum sought to justify the marginalisation of the performing arts by arguing that lesson time could only be allocated to those subjects that might lead to a secure future career. Some candidates pointed out that sporting activities rarely come under curricular scrutiny, whereas the performing arts do. Many responses mentioned cost cutting and a number of answers also referred to the impact on a nation's culture if an exclusively instrumental or utilitarian approach to education is made.

Question 9

There were several good responses to this question, especially those that referred to national mythologies, local deities and folklore. Learners gave examples of sacred rivers, forests, and mountains, and of the stories attached to them. Others only attempted to place tales, myths and fables in a contemporary context. Among these learners there was a tendency to make comparisons with "simple stories" rather than focus on how tales, myths and fables have a particular depth and resonance. Better answers considered how modernity has taken away many things such as myth, magic and tradition. A few candidates drew on their family experience of listening to the stories that were being told to the young by the old.

Question 10

Candidates identified the emboldened "you" and "your" in this question, which meant that there was a range of approaches. For instance, there was the often mentioned influence of well-known food chains or local cuisines. There were many references to the significance of traditional foods and their social as well as religious importance. Weaker responses simply described national dishes and did not draw significance from their examples. One very good response was a well-structured essay about Russian food, including its history and meaning as well background recipes. Generally, successful responses were able to establish a link between community and identity.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8001/12
Paper 12

Key messages

Content

- Answer the set question and focus on the key words.
- Support your main points with appropriate examples.
- Keep anecdotal/personal evidence to a minimum.
- An introduction should immediately address the key words of the question and show understanding of them.
- A conclusion should be a reasoned assessment of the arguments made.
- Ensure that all aspects of the question are addressed.
- Re-visit the question after each paragraph.
- Use discourse markers (however, consequently, in addition) to link ideas and paragraphs to produce a clearly structured, cohesive argument.
- Solid details/examples avoid vagueness and show knowledge.

Use of English

- Leave time to check your English thoroughly to avoid basic errors.
- Concentrate on using appropriate vocabulary so expression is fluent and precise (some over-ambition at times).
- Basic sentence structure/grammar needs to be accurate to ensure clear communication of content.
- Use appropriate prepositions (of/in/by) and articles (the/a).
- Spelling and punctuation were usually accurate.

General comments

Generally, responses did address the chosen questions and were structured within a paragraph framework using an appropriate introduction and conclusion. Sometimes the second paragraph behaved more as an introduction or responses ended abruptly due to the absence of a proper conclusion.

More successful responses answered the question as set, focused on the key words and included a variety of examples to illustrate the main points. Such points were sometimes developed to add depth, and make the argument more convincing and engaging thus avoiding vague generalisations. Limited anecdotal evidence is acceptable but should not dominate the whole essay and should be used in conjunction with other details.

When the set question demands it, candidates should focus on aspects of their own country; if this is not the prompt then a broader focus is required. Stronger responses demonstrated good topic knowledge and included local, regional and global examples to support points. Sometimes candidates chose questions where they were either insufficiently familiar with the topic or did not understand all aspects of the question. Candidates need to spend time studying the chosen question to make sure they understand what is being asked and then re-visit after every paragraph to check that key words are being addressed. This could add to their skills and develop confidence as they progress through the essay.

Most candidates used the time reasonably efficiently and were able to produce a clearly structured essay of around the recommended length. Introductions may have been long at times but a majority did attempt to address the question and this was reflected in the remaining response. Even though there is a time pressure here, candidates should attempt to produce a conclusion which arrives at a reasoned assessment of the main arguments rather than just summarising what has already been written.

Rubric infringements were rare and there were very few unfinished essays. The quality of the Use of English was variable and depended on whether grammatical errors disrupted the fluency or not. Consequently, some candidates need to work on forming secure, grammatically correct sentence structures and to leave time at the end to check for basic errors. A thorough and systematic checking could greatly improve the standard as well as clarify the content. Also, a substantial number of candidates have acquired a wide-ranging English vocabulary but need to improve putting these words in an appropriate context in order to create greater precision.

Use of English

Basic errors need to be checked and corrected in order to improve English marks. Typical examples are listed below:

- subject/verb non-agreement
- incorrect use of prepositions
- frequent incorrect use of definite/indefinite article (the society)
- omission of apostrophes.
- confusion between their/there, to/too, your/you're
- incorrect comparative forms
- missing endings on plurals
- incorrect use of vocabulary
- 'now a days' (as one word)

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Weaker responses tended to neglect 'isolate themselves' or just discuss the ideals of 'friendship'. However, most candidates did acknowledge that friendship between countries enabled trade, migration, aid, peace and could be a solution to global problems such as war, sharing knowledge, environmental issues and poverty. Popular examples included North/South Korea, the United States and the European Community, but could also include small local alliances. Stronger responses displayed good knowledge of recent events and also considered 'isolationism' in the context of its dangers in history (cold war, the pre-First World War period, dictatorships). The most successful responses addressed 'to what extent' presenting other side of the argument: that isolation could be a good thing (no cultural diversity, no interference from outside governance, encouraging patriotism). Additionally some were concerned that 'friendship' was political (pilfering of a country's natural resources, tied into development loans which cannot be repaid). Successful responses tended to conclude that friendship alliances could, in themselves, become isolationist.

Question 2

Responses were divided in their approach to this question, with some focusing on an individual being active all the time and others looking at a human beings' collective responsibility to look after their world, or to continue the advancement of society. Less successful responses described activities which kept people busy all the time, focusing on the need to benefit mainly from study or work, and not to waste time. More successful responses addressed 'how far do you agree', emphasising the 'need' to rest in order to function efficiently, mentally and physically, and the 'need' to achieve balance between work and play. Some extolled the value of rest, sleep and leisure with the most successful responses exploring what it means to be 'doing something' and whether we are doing too much (the pressure to fill our lives with computer activity and phones). Such arguments concluded that, as social beings, there may also be a need to fulfil duties to society and that 'thinking' was as important as 'doing'.

Question 3

Many responses tended to generalise that the poor were impoverished but happy whereas the materialism of the rich drove them to over-work, missing out on family and, ultimately, depression. Here it was argued that, because the pursuit of wealth was never-ending, contentment could never be achieved and could even lead to the exploitation of the poor. However, more successful responses considered the philanthropy of the rich who achieve contentment through sharing their wealth. The most successful responses considered the plight of those trapped in poverty (caste system) balancing notions of close family ties and traditions against feelings of frustration and helplessness. Here, survival might be a more important concept than 'contentment'

resulting in activities such as crime or begging. The most successful responses evaluated whether having too much or too little money could ever result in true contentment and whether it was more important than relationship or emotional satisfaction.

Question 4

Many responses drew examples from their own country, often emphasising 'over-population' as a main reason for constructing new towns. More successful responses extended the scope to other countries arguing that only developed countries had the finance available to build such new communities. Here there was a consideration of the environmental implications, natural resources required and the man power needed to construct an appropriate infrastructure. The most successful responses examined the implication of extending existing towns including renovating derelict areas or creating apartment blocks to save land use. Often conclusions focused on the feasibility of re-locating existing populations and businesses and the affordability of buying a new house in a new town. Additionally responses also questioned whether it might be more important to address population increase as a separate, more important issue.

Question 5

Most responses focused on the benefits of walking as it was convenient, inexpensive and could be built into everyday life and, therefore, not necessarily time consuming or too energetic. When 'only' was considered candidates offered mostly sensible indoor exercise (yoga) that required the minimum of additional equipment with expert instruction available online. Sometimes swimming or Zumba were mentioned but without specifying the need for water or the dangers of 'muscle pull'. More successful responses considered safety aspects including air pollution, traffic, vulnerability to crime, the timing of walks and accessibility to footpaths or safe pavements (highlighting different standards in different countries). The most successful ones extended the scope of their discussion to include the sick and elderly arguing that this was perhaps the only accessible exercise for such groups, albeit with supervision, but only after the passage of time and with training (post knee/hip replacements). Responses which fully debated and analysed a range of issues were more successful than ones which presented a list.

Question 6

Many responses described how maths had helped them in life: calculating things, understanding bills, banking, shopping and budgeting but could be too generalised rather than focusing on 'your' locality or region. More successful responses considered the application of maths in specific areas: architecture, tunnels and bridge building, technology and trade. The most successful responses examined the use of maths in the occupations and governance of a specific country/locality and concluded that maths is needed in every area of life. Such responses also examined whether it was effectively taught in their area and concluded that this depended on the motivation of the learner, the resources/ethos of the School or college and the attitude of the local authorities.

Question 7

Some responses tended to be descriptive, focusing on sportswear being a fashion statement to enable 'fitting in' or 'showing off' or 'looking like sports stars or celebrities'. Other Issues were considered such as peer pressure, expense (changing football shirts) and the value of 'cheap imitation' without brand names. More successful responses covered similar ideas but also examined why companies extended their sportswear so that it could be labelled 'fashion'. The most successful ones distinguished between sportswear which could be described as fashion and sportswear which most definitely is not, suggesting that is often the signature of comfortable everyday casual wear as opposed to the necessary 'smart wear' for work or school routines.

Question 8

A few responses with most trying to interpret what sculpture was, sometimes including works of architecture (Eiffel Tower, pyramids, leaning Tower of Pisa). More successful responses focused on the value of sculpture in life such as its historical, religious or social significance, presenting a range of examples including war memorials and religious symbols. The most successful ones also considered their artistic value and potential to attract tourists whereby sculpture may have some ornamental value.

Question 9

Most responses showed an awareness of the 'purpose of advertising' or 'what makes a good advert' but not always focusing on 'memorable'. More successful responses introduced a range of examples and considered issues such as music, catchy logos, headlines, comedy, and whether it is the product itself which is 'memorable'. The most successful responses argued that it depended on the level of competition as with car advertisements whereby 'memorable' allowed one to stand out above another. Such responses also considered other features that enabled the advert to be successful (eye-catching, persuasive, factual/technical details, where placed and when). Some concluded that although 'memorable' may help to sell a product at the beginning of a campaign, frequent repetition could eventually produce a negative effect.

Question 10

Many responses focused on the fear of writing anything down: of being criticised, of lacking writing skills, damage to relationships or the consequences of reprisals or censorship in certain countries. Some were more concerned with 'disclosure' and ignored the 'writing' element of the question. More successful responses also considered the oral story telling traditions of some cultures whereby memory and listening were the most important aspects. Although examples could be anecdotal, there was awareness that modern technology enabled people to write down their stories for global access via blogs and other social media. The most successful ones explored the need to enhance mundane experiences to make them interesting for others and that this often required a unique talent citing J.K. Rowling, Dickens, Emily Bronte as examples. However, such responses also acknowledged that publication was a competitive business, especially today, and that determination and luck could also play a part.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8001/13
Paper 13

Key messages

Content

- Answer the set question and focus on the key words.
- Support your main points with appropriate examples.
- Keep anecdotal/personal evidence to a minimum.
- An introduction should immediately address the key words of the question and show understanding of them.
- A conclusion should be a reasoned assessment of the arguments made.
- Ensure that all aspects of the question are addressed.
- Re-visit the question after each paragraph.
- Use discourse markers (however, consequently, in addition) to link ideas and paragraphs to produce a clearly structured, cohesive argument.
- Solid details/examples avoid vagueness and show knowledge.

Use of English

- Leave time to check your English thoroughly to avoid basic errors.
- Concentrate on using appropriate vocabulary so expression is fluent and precise.
- Basic sentence structure/grammar needs to be accurate to ensure clear communication of content.
- Avoid using a casual/informal style.

General comments

Generally, responses did address the chosen questions and were structured within a paragraph framework using an appropriate introduction and conclusion.

More successful responses answered the question as set, focused on the key words and included a variety of examples to illustrate the main points. Such points were sometimes developed to add depth, and make the argument more convincing and engaging thus avoiding vague generalisations. Limited anecdotal evidence is acceptable but should not dominate the whole essay and should be used in conjunction with other details. Also, the essay should be in a formal style appropriate to a structured discussion so an informal, 'chatty' style is inappropriate.

When the set question demands it, candidates should focus on aspects of their own country; if this is not the prompt then a broader focus is required. Stronger responses demonstrated good topic knowledge and included local, regional and global examples to support points. Sometimes candidates chose questions where they were either insufficiently familiar with the topic or did not understand all aspects of the question candidates need to spend time studying the chosen question to make sure they understand what is being asked and then re-visit after every paragraph to check that key words are being addressed. This could add to their skills and develop confidence as they progress through the essay.

Most candidates used the time reasonably efficiently and were able to produce a clearly structured essay of around the recommended length. The introduction may have been long at times but a majority did attempt to address the question according to the plan outlined in the introduction. Even though there is a time pressure here, candidates should attempt to produce a conclusion which arrives at a reasoned assessment of the main arguments rather than just summarising what has already been written. Conclusions were either brief or absent so time needs to be managed to allow for a proper ending to the response.

Rubric infringements were rare and there were very few unfinished essays although some were not always extensive. The quality of the Use of English was variable and depended on whether grammatical errors disrupted the fluency or not. Consequently, some candidates need to work on forming secure, grammatically correct sentence structures and to leave time at the end to check for basic errors. A thorough and systematic checking could greatly improve the standard as well as clarify the content. Also, a substantial number of candidates have acquired a wide-ranging English vocabulary but need to improve putting these words in an appropriate context in order to create greater precision.

Use of English

Basic errors need to be checked and corrected in order to improve English marks. Typical examples are listed below:

- subject/verb non-agreement
- incorrect use of prepositions
- frequent incorrect use of definite/indefinite article (the society)
- omission of apostrophes
- confusion between their/there, to/too, your/you're
- incorrect comparative forms
- missing endings on plurals
- incorrect use of vocabulary
- keep informality/colloquialism to a minimum (stuff, right?)

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most responses related 'life getting better' to health care improvements, technology and global co-operation but balanced this against political instability in certain countries, the continuous threat of terrorism and the exhaustion of natural resources. Sometimes responses were on a personal level, describing the effects on them of local issues or changes. More successful responses considered 'to what extent' and related more to 'will get better' and 'modern society', arguing that better health care 'will' encourage population increase and an ageing population and dependency on technology 'will' promote obesity and a world controlled by robots. The most successful responses provided a more subtle approach, examining 'brave new world' as a concept that was both idealistic and unachievable and that any 'new world' was more about anxiety and entering unknown territory than about courage. Such responses also concluded that in such a world things could get better for some but worse for others.

Question 2

A majority of responses chose Adolph Hitler for this question but did produce a balanced profile. Such responses tended to be descriptive but showed knowledge 'for and against' the chosen leader. More successful responses placed the leader in the context of what may be considered as successful or unsuccessful leadership, with issues of self-interest, democracy, authoritarianism and empathy with others. The most successful ones examined how all this fitted in with the personality and style of the chosen leader and how this affected the progress of a specific country. Such responses often concluded that quality of leadership depended on transparency, whether the leader implemented policies to alleviate such issues as poverty and the level of funding given to such welfare systems as health care and education.

Question 3

Most responses described stories which could create panic or sensation, usually taken from terrorist attacks, health scares, extreme weather or crime. Some considered that the news could be sensational in itself, without the need to exaggerate but did suggest that the deliberate placement of the story (as headlines) accompanied by dramatic pictures could increase its sensational value. More successful responses focused on 'boost their circulation' arguing that with increasing competition from online news sources actual newspapers needed to find ways of attracting customers. Some gave examples of how language could be sensationalised and how the wording of headlines (together with punctuation) could give a sense of immediacy or urgency to a story, all designed to sell newspapers. The most successful responses addressed 'how far is this true' suggesting that newspapers are more likely to focus on, and even sensationalise, celebrity scandal or sport than anything else in order to appeal to younger readers. Such responses

concluded that anything written down intended to be sold would need to contain some elements of exaggeration in order to create enough interest to boost sales.

Question 4

This was generally well answered as there was recognition that automation could replace jobs, especially in the manufacturing or retailing industries (robotics for assembling cars, self-service checkouts, online shopping). However, most responses also acknowledged that other jobs would be created to control or maintain the technology but would be skilled rather than unskilled. More successful ones widened the scope to include artificial intelligence, with the potential to replace teachers, service outlets and the leisure industry (computerised check-ins at hotels) but concluding that this may be a positive thing, releasing people from repetitive activities and allowing training in new areas. The most successful ones argued that this was inevitably the way forward, creating more efficiency and reliability and increasing people's leisure time. However, it was concluded that there was uncertainty as to how loss of jobs would be compensated to avoid social instability, some suggesting that because it would be a gradual process there would be time to find solutions.

Question 5

Some responses focused on zoo animals being re-introduced to their natural habitat but acknowledged that such a habitat had probably changed and that time would be needed to adapt. More successful responses widened the scope, arguing that it would help balance the ecosystem but could be counter-productive if not investigated beforehand for predators, changes, accessibility of food and nesting materials. Some considered the dangers of re-introducing non-indigenous animals (effect on existing populations). The most successful ones considered 'how far do you agree' introducing ethical concerns over 'forced' re-introductions rather than allowing natural migrations. Some questioned whether 'original habitat' actually existed or whether it had been invented. The conclusion here was that it could be supported if it was beneficial to the animal's welfare and was likely to increase its population, otherwise some form of captivity may be the best option.

Question 6

Some responses tended to balance the medical benefits of sharing (genetic tracking, aid research, quick access by medical professionals) against the 'fears' (hacking, could be used prejudicially by certain bodies, entitlement to privacy, principle of patient consent). Some responses considered the unwelcoming feeling of vulnerability that anyone could access medical history. More successful responses addressed 'how far do you agree', concluding that patient awareness of such sharing should be of paramount importance but that this was not always possible in cases of emergency, when hospitals might need to share without seeking permission. The most successful responses discussed that some form of record sharing was essential in an increasingly migratory, travel orientated world but that there should always be some sort of regulatory mechanism in place to prevent unauthorised access and protect security. Most concluded that it was necessary for medical professionals to have unhindered access as lives could be at stake.

Question 7

Some responses described specific tattoos, piercings or even make-up as examples of rebellion, identity or depicting memorable events and presenting a certain image to the world. Some acknowledged that this may be a result of peer group pressure or a whim and had little artistic merit so 'art form' was only considered in general terms. More successful responses considered the cultural significance of body decoration, showing some knowledge of certain symbolism or features such as 'extending necks'. When referring to tattoos 'art form' referenced the equipment and skill needed, describing the skin as a 'canvas' and comparing 'tattooing' with creating pictures in studios. The most successful responses widened the scope and focused mainly on 'art form' using a range of examples and addressing 'to what extent', concluding that there was a difference between one-off tattoos or piercings as a 'badge' of pride and those who continuously added decorations to their body so it became a continuous work of art. Those who gave a wide range of cultural examples were particularly successful.

Question 8

This question was generally well answered with most responses accounting for the popularity of second-hand clothing and associated 'thrift' stores, often with a focus on uniqueness and value for money. The trend for 'retro' was highlighted with the internet encouraging even greater popularity. More successful responses widened the scope to include furniture, arts and craft and jewellery with a reference to people living a second-hand 'lifestyle'. The most successful ones highlighted the dangers of such popularity attracting fake items, or pushing up the cost, with the accusation that it is all pretension and too far removed from reality to be taken seriously. Such responses concluded that such fashion could be popular because it is an escape from the modern world and indicates a yearning for a bygone age.

Question 9

All responses described two examples in some detail but some just narrated with only passing reference to 'artistic value'. More successful responses considered the effect of music or specific themes or analysed characterisation. The most successful ones also provided a balanced view acknowledging that animation was purely entertainment and that the story and voice overs were just as important as 'artistic value'. Some concluded that the techniques, time and skill needed to bring such films to life gave them their value.

Question 10

All responses presented three structures. Although some simply described them, more successful ones attempted to justify their inclusion in a festival by referring to materials, technology of the day, purpose and integration with the environment. The aesthetic appeal was considered as was its design and durability. The most successful responses provided good detail about all three structures and even made a comparison, concluding that, it was difficult to make a comparison between structures from different times as cultural significance had to be taken into account in order for there to be a creditable justification.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8001/21
Paper 21

Key messages

Candidates are reminded that they only need to answer one question. Marks are only awarded for one question and by answering more questions, candidates lose time they could otherwise spend on a better focused response.

It is vital that candidates read through the paper carefully before choosing their question to answer. This is particularly significant in the case of the comprehension assignment where candidates need to be aware of the demands of the vocabulary and sentence composition sub-question.

It is important that candidates use their own words when this is requested in the rubric. Little, if any, credit can be awarded to material which is copied from the text.

Word limits are imposed in certain sub-questions to test candidates' ability to write in a concise fashion. When the limit is exceeded, material beyond that point cannot be credited.

General comments

All candidates showed a clear engagement with the paper and it was rare to encounter an uncompleted response to a sub-question. Only a small number appeared to be out of their depth either in terms of their ability to comprehend the questions, or write in intelligible English. Generally, the standard of written English was very good. Most candidates were able to access the top band for Use of English as their writing was fluent and accurate. Where the rubric concerning 'own words' was stated, most candidates made commendable efforts to avoid direct lifting from the text.

The standard of the examination seemed consistent with that of previous years and the wide range of marks awarded demonstrated that it was of appropriate difficulty for the cohort. Candidates responded thoroughly and at appropriate length and there was no evidence that any candidates were short of time.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was the most popular question.

- (a) The majority of answers were fully correct. 'Manufactured' seemed to be the most difficult of the four words to deduce from the context. There were some rubric errors where candidates used more than one word.
- (b) Because the source was written in effectively colloquial English, most candidates found it easy to avoid lifts: where they occurred, these usually involved 'vegetation', 'ridiculous shorts', 'ugly stone patio', 'drowned flowers', 'prize vegetables', 'expensive tarmac driveway', 'glass bottles in the recycling box' and 'manufactured complaints'. Other than that, most candidates were able to score effectively by listing examples of Yak's disagreeable behaviour.
- (c) Most candidates handled this question in the same way with the advantage that they could often recycle reflexively some of the material in (b). In both (b) and (c) the best answers discussed character and personality disorders. Yak was described as self-centred, confused, a hypocrite,

stubborn and ignorant, whilst Kirs came across as rude and disrespectful in cutting off Yak mid-sentence, and always maintaining an air of superiority over his neighbour.

- (d) (i) Most candidates gave answers such as greater civility, tolerance and give and take between the two neighbours, not considering the evidence of the source that expecting them to behave better without any form of sanction stood little chance of working. Some candidates, who suggested a sanction such as calling the police or organising a neighbourhood meeting, did so without considering that actions like these were likely to inflame rather than ease the situation.
- (ii) 'Yes' and 'no' answers were evenly divided. The most popular points that were made concerned the notion that neighbours should try to get along if they could, and that Kirs could not reasonably expect Yak to buy a new house. The word limit appeared to have often been ignored.

Question 2

This was the least popular of the three questions.

- (a) (i) This was well answered. Some candidates quoted too much from the passage such as 'ebb and flow *through history*', which was a rubric error.
- (ii) This was also an accessible question, with many candidates expressing the central idea of change gradually transforming things first into their opposites and then further changing to a version of their original state.
- (iii) This was also well answered, with a number of candidates quoting too much from the passage.
- (b) Stronger answers focused on lines 22 to 25, which contained a definition of courtesy founded on mutual respect and willingness to consider others.
- (c) (i) This question focused candidates' attention on the relevant section of the passage and tested their ability to re-phrase important ideas effectively. Most managed to keep within the word limit and also managed to contrive adequate paraphrases. Some appeared to struggle with 'graceful healthy lifestyle' and 'exhilarating natural environment'.
- (ii) This was generally very well answered and many candidates scored highly by looking at society's changing view of women in different ways. Stronger answers pointed out that modern society had seen through the essential vapidness of the debutante system and adherence to artificial codes of etiquette.
- (iii) For this question, almost everyone scored one mark with those making the clear link to Western culture gaining maximum marks.
- (d) This was well and fully answered by the majority.
- (e) (i) This question was less well answered. For instance, some candidates defined adjectives as nouns, made guesses such as 'uncouth means lacking in couth', and demonstrated lack of precision. Many candidates who knew that 'burgeoning' involved growing did not qualify the growth as rapid. Generally, 'counterparts' were too often defined as friends or colleagues, 'uncouth' was usually incorrect, 'frequent' was defined as an adjective and most definitions of 'defunct' lacked precision. Most candidates knew what 'aspiring' meant.
- (ii) This question was also less well answered. Many of the sentences composed lacked precision and often the rubric appeared to have been ignored as the sentence was often too close to the subject matter of the passage.

Question 3

- (a) Almost all candidates answered this question correctly, with ‘the danger to children’, ‘the danger of confusing the tablet with candy’ or ‘the risk of a start-up in modern business’ being the most popular suggestions.
- (b) Most answers chose BUZZA, adducing a list of reasons given in the source. Many responses needed more development as it was common for candidates to quote the fact that the company had received 18 awards without using this as evidence of a proven track record. Some candidates, who opted for EPIC, correctly observed that Newaria might receive better and more personal attention from a small company with relatively few clients.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question well.
- (d) The vocabulary questions usually attracted full marks.
- (e) and (f) As these questions cover the same material they may be considered together. Table B contained key information concerning the size of the projected audience, the advertisement period, key personnel, and estimated income. The vast majority of candidates followed the rubric by raising both advantages and disadvantages, and used the material to obtain significant credit. The very best answers used the figures to compare the costs involved with the estimated income and put this in the context of Newaria’s present turnover and pre-tax profits.

Many candidates incorrectly stated that a certain method was the cheapest or that an advertisement period was the longest. Few candidates nuanced the information by using phrases such as ‘one of the shortest advertisement periods’ or ‘an acceptable profit in view of the cost to make and place the advert’. On the other hand, many answers made much of the use of the internet as a major advantage, given the projected sales audience and the limited attraction to young people of a middle-aged parent or garden show host as the face of the campaign.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8001/22
Paper 22

Key messages

- It is important that candidates read each question carefully and answer it as it is stated.
- Answers need to be concise and candidates are reminded to keep to the word limit.
- Candidates are reminded that they only need to answer one question. Marks are only awarded for one question and by answering more questions, candidates lose time they could otherwise spend on a better focused response.
- It is important that every element of a question is addressed.

General comments

The standard of written English was strong. A range of connectives and conjunctions were incorporated by many candidates into their work and therefore, their answers were structured and flowed well. Successful candidates used modal verbs and expressions, and showed a good understanding of how to incorporate idioms and colloquial expressions into their responses. They also demonstrated a good knowledge of how to express a range of opinions and which register to use.

Less successful responses were generalised, assertive or speculative, which impacted on the credit awarded.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A minority of candidates chose to respond to this question.

- (a) Some candidates offered answers in their own words.

Weaker responses usually selected the correct material, but copied it entirely from the passage or gave answers in their own words that were too vague. A few candidates based their answer on material in the second paragraph, which was an infringement of the rubric, so the response could not be credited. It is important that, when the question directs candidates to certain lines in the passage, they restrict their responses to that section.

- (b) Many candidates responded to (i), (ii) and (iii) in their own words.

Some candidates copied material directly from the passage or offered answers in their own words that did not provide enough detail. Regarding (i), a few candidates answered without referring to the text, citing problems to do with the general use of smartphones such as addiction, cost and bullying issues. In (iii), a few candidates did not offer groups of people who had been affected by the use of smartphones as directed in the question, but mentioned, for example, industries that had been damaged.

- (c) Stronger responses kept to the word limit and responded using their own words. Many candidates were able to express the following points: possession being linked to how we regard ourselves, the link with inheritance, the memories attached to possessions, the reminiscences they provide, the ageing process and the vacuum that would occur with no possessions.

Less successful candidates appeared to struggle to express the points clearly and fully in their own words. Some wrote out the question as part of their response or included irrelevant material. It is crucial that candidates keep to the word limit as creditworthy material appearing after the word limit cannot gain any credit. A few candidates offered responses that were not linked to the passage, though the question directed candidates to paragraph 5. Instead they discussed, for example, the use of smartphones by young people currently and the implications for society in the future.

- (d) Candidates who gained most credit noted that two ways were required and conveyed all the relevant information in their own words.

Other candidates copied key words and phrases from the passage, or offered irrelevant material before then addressing the ways. A few candidates did not offer two ways as directed in the question.

- (e) Many candidates engaged well with this sub-question. Chair, bag and kitchen were the most popular choices to discuss. Stronger responses were characterised by candidates choosing three separate items and developing their explanations fully.

- (f) This question was less well answered and there are several ways for candidates to improve this: use the same grammatical form as used in the question (e.g. 'to destroy' is not the correct form to replace 'has vaporised'); ensure that the subject matter of the sentence offered is not the same as in the passage (e.g. 'lavish' in a sentence about advertising campaigns); provide only one synonym per question, especially as only the first answer is marked; check that the exact meaning of the word is clearly defined in the sentence given; respond with only one sentence per question as two sentences separated by a comma is a rubric infringement (comma splice – overcome by the use of a semi colon instead of a comma); offer six separate sentences rather than writing a narrative which randomly includes the six words or phrases; use the six words or phrases given in the question rather than the candidate's own six synonyms.

Question 2

A minority of candidates chose to respond to this question.

- (a) Many candidates kept to the word limit and responded using their own words.

Less successful candidates repeated key words from the expression quoted (for example, 'thought' when explaining 'a thought-provoking tome') or wrote out the expression before starting to explain it. They also offered responses in their own words that were too vague. For example, a few candidates did not convey the idea of 'guaranteed' in their explanation of 'a guaranteed tear-jerker'.

- (b) There are a few ways responses to this question could be improved: use the same grammatical form as used in the question (e.g. 'goosebumps' is not the correct form to replace 'hair-raising'); check that the subject matter of the sentence offered is not the same as in the passage (e.g. 'myriad' in a sentence about twists and turns); provide only one synonym per question, especially as only the first answer is marked; ensure that the exact meaning of the word is clearly defined in the sentence given; respond with only one sentence per question as two sentences separated by a comma is a rubric infringement (comma splice – rectified by the use of a semi colon instead of a comma); offer four separate sentences rather than writing a narrative which randomly includes the four words or phrases; use the four words or phrases given in the question rather than the candidate's own four synonyms.

- (c) Candidates engaged well with this sub-question. Stronger responses followed the instructions to explain the characters of the three judges using the material in brackets. Many candidates showed an ability to 'read between the lines' and thus understood the characters of Benji and Tula. Many candidates realised that Benji showed humility and empathy, whilst Tula was self-obsessed and focused on status and success. Some excellent uses of insightful vocabulary were seen.

Weaker responses did not follow the instructions to explain the three characters in relation to the material in brackets. Instead, some simply retold the conversation, so offered a narrative rather than an analysis. Some candidates responded using irrelevant material. For example, in (iii), candidates describing Ove as adventurous were not focused on explaining his character by using

the material in brackets. Weaker responses were characterised by the use of simple or incomplete sentences. A few candidates offered a list of characteristics without explanation.

- (d)** Candidates engaged very well with this sub-question. Many candidates gained high marks by realising the connection between Benji and Yolo in **(i)** and how the competitive nature of Tula would impact on her choice in **(ii)**. In **(v)**, many candidates exhibited the ability to cite another genre of literature. They then justified their choice by, for example, describing the impact on a reader of that genre, explaining the popularity of the omitted genre or giving a reason why it might win the overall prize. Some candidates made the connection between Ove's stressful life and the self-help quality of Yolo's poems in **(iii)**, while some managed to convey the difficulty involved when comparing five books that were already prize winners in **(iv)**.

A few candidates seemed to find it difficult to make the aforementioned links in **(iii)** and **(iv)**. In **(v)**, few did not follow the instruction in the question and cited a genre that was already represented in the Pinker Prize for Literature. Some candidates would have improved their response by giving the justification required by the question, rather than offering a description or definition of their chosen genre.

Question 3

The majority of candidates chose this question.

- (a)** and **(b)** Candidates responded well to these sub-questions. Stronger responses incorporated the use of synonyms for key words and expressions in the passage, exhibited an understanding that nuanced answers were required for higher marks, and showed the ability to be insightful and therefore understood all the characters depicted in the passage. Successful candidates also used material garnered from all the possible sources – background, the three options and the additional information – making links across the passage to create cogent arguments to defend their choice of option. Many candidates followed the instruction to refer only to the option they had chosen.

Less successful candidates did not follow the instruction to refer only to their chosen option in their response (for example, by choosing Option A in **(a)** because Option B would not suit Heri and his business interests and he would not get on with the children in Option C).

Weaker answers focused only on facts from the passage about their chosen charity and developed these facts using their own generalised explanations, rather than making links across the passage and incorporating information gleaned from the background and additional information sections of the passage to justify their choice.

A few candidates offered random statements from the passage in their responses without any development or indication of whether they were advantages or disadvantages. Therefore, their response was a narrative rather than an analysis.

It is important that candidates consider both the advantages and disadvantages as directed in these sub-questions. A few candidates cited more disadvantages than advantages in **(a)** and more advantages than disadvantages in **(b)**.

- (c)** Some candidates noted that Point 6 was irrelevant, though few candidates offered sufficient justification to achieve full marks on this sub-question.

A few candidates listed two or three pieces of information that they regarded as irrelevant, which is a rubric infringement. Many candidates gave the justification that the point was irrelevant (a repetition of the question) or not connected to the choice of plan, but more detail is required to gain credit.

Some candidates suggested points that were relevant when coming to a decision regarding which charity to choose. A common misunderstanding was to cite Point 7, but the candidates had not taken into account the impact this point had on Option B. A few candidates cited one of the options in its entirety as irrelevant.

- (d) In (i), many candidates adhered to the instructions to choose a good cause, to not repeat material from the passage and to keep to the word limit, therefore gaining higher marks. They often showed compassion for those in difficulty, wanting to donate the money to improve infrastructure in rural areas, to build or renovate mosques, or to help those who are mentally ill or in debt.

Weaker responses were characterised by candidates dividing the money across several good causes or citing one of the options in the passage, both of which were rubric infringements. Some candidates exceeded the word limit.

In (ii), many candidates offered insightful responses, showing understanding of the message behind the quote and using mature expression to explain the positive feelings engendered by the act of giving that are worth more than that which has been given.

Some candidates took the quote literally and discussed not giving too much to poor people. Some thought that it meant that when you gave something to someone, they would return it at a later date.

Use of English

- Many candidates had difficulty conjugating the present tense correctly and consistently in their responses. However, many were able to manipulate more complex tenses confidently.
- Some candidates found the use of articles and pronouns problematic. They did not use the articles consistently and struggled to integrate pronouns into their answers, finding it difficult to make them agree correctly with their subjects.
- Some candidates seemed to have difficulty with the use of the singular and plural forms of nouns, confusing the one with the other.
- Some candidates could have used a wider range of punctuation and conjunctions. Commas and full stops were seen in all responses, but only few candidates were able to use a semi colon or a colon with proficiency. 'Which' was used by some candidates instead of 'who'.
- Some candidates, especially when answering **Question 2(c)**, responded using simple sentences as well as incomplete sentences, both of which impacted upon the Use of English mark as complexity is one of the criteria employed when assessing the Use of English mark.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8001/23
Paper 23

Key messages

Answers need to be concise and candidates are reminded to keep to the word limit.

Candidates are reminded that they only need to answer one question. Marks are only awarded for one question and by answering more questions, candidates lose time they could otherwise spend on a better focused response.

It is important that every element of a question is addressed.

It is recommended that candidates take the time to read through the whole paper and make a judgement on which question is most suitable before attempting to write anything.

General comments

Whilst many candidates successfully followed the rubric instructions and chose only one question to answer, a minority of candidates answered two or all three of the questions. When this happens, candidates are more restricted by time constraints and do not have the opportunity to develop enough detail in their answers for each question and consequently score lower marks. There were also some occasions when candidates did not answer all the sub-questions of their chosen question. It is highly recommended that a candidate tries to answer every part of a question.

The majority of responses matched the criteria found in the top two bands for Use of English, indicating a high standard of writing. Less successful candidates copied from the passage and therefore, did not demonstrate independence in their use of English.

Many candidates were able to demonstrate a high level of skill in both their use of vocabulary and construction of complex sentences. There was a broad range of connectives and conjunctions being used, which resulted in well-structured and fluent answers. Examples of these included 'firstly', 'secondly', 'in addition', 'moreover', 'likewise' and 'similarly'. Good use was also made of phrases like 'the only disadvantage is' and 'my second reason is'. A range of conjunctions was seen and their use allowed candidates to join sentences together in an extended way. Some candidates also used modal verbs (e.g. 'might' and 'may') and words such as 'probably', 'perhaps', 'possibly' and 'likely' to good effect. This was particularly seen in **Question 3**, where these nuanced responses helped candidates gain marks.

Weaker responses included simple sentences, capital letters that were missed out at the beginning of sentences as well as phrases rather than full sentences.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was a popular question. Some candidates engaged well with the resources and were able to elicit and communicate their understanding well. Others found it challenging and were less successful.

- (a) This was a challenging question for many candidates. They appeared to find it difficult to pick out the information about people being addicted to online celebrity gossip rather than reading quality literature such as that of Hemingway.
- (b) Many candidates did not attempt to write responses to this question in their own words as directed by the rubric.
 - (i) Some candidates explained what a cognitive activity tracker does such as count the number of words a person reads and notes the speed of their reading.
 - (ii) Some candidates recognised that gaze-trackers were able to check where a person's eyes were looking by monitoring how the eye moves around.
- (c) Most candidates were able to gain a mark for noting that Tobii's eye-tracking system was affordable because it was cheap. Not many gave enough information about the ability of characters in a video game reacting to a player's gaze and therefore, making the game more realistic.
- (d) The requirements to write the response in their own words as well as keeping within the word limit proved challenging for many candidates. Some candidates confused their responses with that required for **Question (b)(i)**.
- (e) Similarly in this question, candidates appeared to struggle to use their own words. Some were able to recognise the role the eye-tracker played in supporting an improvement in a person's reading and that it can work out what really interests a reader.
- (f) (i) Generally, this part of the question was not well answered due to the fact that candidates often offered the wrong grammatical form of the synonym. In order to gain marks in this question, it is crucial that candidates use a synonym in the correct grammatical form as is in the original question. For example, 'to improve' is not the correct form for 'need revamping'. Candidates should provide only one synonym per question.
 - (ii) Candidates seemed to have difficulty in scoring half of the marks available or more. In order to improve their responses, candidates should:

Ensure that the subject matter of the sentence is different to that of the reading material;
Check that the exact meaning of the word is clearly defined in the sentence given;
Make sure they understand that two sentences separated by a comma is a rubric infringement (comma splice) and could be rectified by the use of a semi colon instead of a comma;
Offer six separate sentences rather than writing a continuous narrative which randomly includes the six words or phrases;
Use the six words or phrases given in the question rather than the candidate's own synonyms.

Examples of good responses were:

"Ariana's slang is about to go mainstream, most of my friends have begun to say it."

"Culinary classes are programmed for those whose cooking skills need revamping."

"Global warming has a negative impact on the world."

Question 2

This question was the most popular. Most candidates were able to engage well with the sub-questions.

- (a) Some candidates were successful in providing explanations in their own words for the expressions chosen from the text

Examples of good responses were:

Expression	Explanation
To stand out from the crowd	To have a unique trait or talent To be different from others
A piece of the action	Get involved and have some fun
Without equal	No comparison Nothing like it
The last word in	The most up to date
All walks of life	People participating have different backgrounds and experiences

- (b) Many candidates wrote successfully about some of the language techniques used in the advertisement that persuaded the reader. The most popular technique identified was the use of rhetorical questions. Examples of good responses were:

“The use of rhetorical questions makes the reader imaging themselves in the activities so they are persuaded to participate.”

“Including hyperboles like ‘mighty’ and ‘glory’ makes the adventure sound more interesting.”

- (c) Many candidates identified and explained characteristics of each applicant and why they would be suitable crew members. Examples of creditable responses were:

Inge: “As she enjoys adventures, she will like this time outside taking a break from everyday life.”

Maxi: “As Maxi trained as a journalist, she will be perfectly prepared to keep a daily blog for the race followers because she would be skilled at this.”

Junid: “He is fit to handle the endurance this trip requires as he runs and does cycling frequently so is physically strong”.

- (d) Many candidates were able to identify and explain the characteristics that would make each applicant an unsuitable crew member. Examples of responses were:

Inge: “As she is claustrophobic spending months in a single place, the yacht, surrounded by the people of the crew might make her uncomfortable and she could become an obstacle to good team work.”

Maxi: “She has experienced seasickness on a past sailing trip so it is likely she will experience it again in the race and would not be able to do the activities every member of the crew needs to do and even become a burden on the team.”

Junid: “He does not interact easily with new people which can be an obstacle during the first few months of the journey preventing the team from being fully integrated and work together as best as possible.”

Question 3

This question was the second most popular choice. Several candidates who chose it engaged well with the question, writing at length in many cases.

- (a) and (b)** Almost all candidates chose one of the three jobs available. Becoming a restaurant owner was the most popular choice in **(a)** and the university lecturer and charity worker in **(b)**. Many candidates responded well to these sub-questions, scoring at least half of the marks available, with a minority managing nine or more marks on at least one of the sub-questions. Most candidates gave the right balance of advantages and disadvantages in each sub-question. Other candidates did not follow the instructions and focused on either advantages or disadvantages only.

Good responses were characterised by the ability to use synonyms for the words in the passage, confident use of comparatives and superlatives, and a clear understanding of the life of Anna so that the chosen job would fit/would not fit into their situation. Examples of responses gaining credit included the following:

“Anna is tired and unhappy with everything to do with the Law; for that reasons being a lecturer and teaching about Law will decrease her motivation and make her emotionally drained in a bad way.”

“Anna should not take this job; this is due to the very extreme schedule involving weekends and some work at night. This will make her feel exhausted in every aspect of herself.”

“The fact that she would be her own boss is highly beneficial as she will be able to spend more time with her mother if she wants to.”

Some candidates made general points that could be applied to any job, often focusing on the fact that Anna is tired and stressed from her current job and looking for a change of career.

Certain key phrases were often copied in their entirety, limiting the marks that could be gained.

- (c)** A good number of candidates were able to recognise the point about Anna’s brother working in an oil rig as being least relevant to her decision. Fewer gave effective explanations as to why this would be irrelevant and, in many cases, just repeated back the question rather than considering that he may know little about the type of jobs she is considering and therefore could not offer any useful help.
- (d)** Most candidates answered within the stated word limit. Some responses went beyond the word limit, which made these candidates lose out on some marks.
- (i)** Candidates were able to give an opinion on why bonuses should or should not be paid. Most candidates answered in favour of bonuses and their motivating quality.
- (ii)** Most candidates were able to offer an alternative approach to supporting dissatisfied staff. Examples ranged from having psychological support services so staff had someone to discuss their concerns with to fringe benefits like more holiday time.

When the word count was adhered to and candidates did not repeat the question format in their response, this question was well answered. When the reasons given did not appear after the cut-off point, candidates gained credit by offering two distinct and developed reasons why companies should/should not pay bonuses to employees.